

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN HUMAN RIGHTS LEAGUE SUPPORTS SLOVENE MINORITY

POSITION ON NON-NECESSITY OF NEW CENSUS

1. AUSTRIAN HUMAN RIGHTS LEAGUE, IN ANNUAL MEETING VIENNA JUNE 24, CALLED ON GOA AND PARLIAMENT TO FULLY IMPLEMENT ARTICLE 7 (MINORITY RIGHTS) OF 1955 STATE TREATY AND, IN DOING SO, TO USE 1951 CENSUS AS BASIS IN ITS DECISION MAKING. IN LATTER CONNECTION, LEAGUE COMMENTED THAT 1961 CENSUS SHOWED "UNNATURAL SHRINKAGE OF SLOVENE MINORITY IN CARINTHIA AFTER ANTI-SLOVENE CAMPAIGN BY AUSTRO-GERMAN NATIONALIST ELEMENTS," AND THAT ANY NEW MINORITY CENSUS WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY SLAV MINORITIES IN CARINTHIA AND BURGENLAND AS ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT DISCRIMINATION AND WOULD PRODUCE EVEN LESS REALISTIC RESULTS.

2. IN OTHER BUSINESS, LEAGUE ELECTED ALFRED STROER, SOCIALIST EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF AUSTRIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION, AS ITS NEW PRESIDENT, REPLACING FORMER CARINTHIAN GOVERNOR FERDINAND WEDENING, ALSO A PROMINENT SOCIALIST.

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3. COMMENT: LEAGUE'S STAND ON SLOVENE MINORITY RIGHTS
WAS LOGICAL STEP AND LONG OVERDUE IN VIEW OF LEAGUE'S
PAST COMMENTARIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ELSEWHERE
IN WORLD. ENDORSEMENT BY LEAGUE AND ITS NEW PRESIDENT
OF SPECIFIC OBSERVATION THAT IMPLEMENTATION BE BASED
ON 1951 CENSUS MAY WELL GENERATE MAJOR CONTROVERSY
WITHIN SOCIALIST PARTY LEADERSHIP WHICH NOW DEVELOPING
ELECTION CAMPAIGN STRATEGY FOR US IN FINAL FIVE WEEKS
BEFORE NATIONAL ELECTIONS ON OCTOBER 5. HERETOFORE,
CONTROVERSY OVER SLOVENE MINORITY RIGHTS, PARTICULARLY
BILINGUAL ROAD-SIGN ISSUE, HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY
NEUTRALIZED AS POSSIBLE CAMPAIGN ISSUE BY ON-RECORD
POSITION OF CHANCELLOR KREISKY AND LEADERSHIP
OF THREE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN CARINTHIA OF NEED
OF NEW MINORITY CENSUS IN SOME FORM OR OTHER PRIOR TO
AND AS BASIS FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 7
OF 1955 STATE TREATY. BUCHANAN

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